

C A L I B E R P R E S S

NEGATIVE BOYRNE

ISSUE TWELVE \$2.95 USA / \$3.95 CAN

ADULTS ONLY



ALAN MOORE • BRIAN BOLLAND • DAVE JOHNSON • NABIEL KANAN • PAUL POPE • TED BOONTHANAKIT

NEGATIVE BURN

VOLUME ONE
NUMBER TWELVE

an anthology
Joe Pruett / Editor

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written by Marc Gacy
illustrated by Ted Slampyak

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illustrated by Ted Boonthanakit

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written by Doug Wheeler
illustrated by Ian Akin
lettered by Tom Orzechowski

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written and illustrated by Paul Pope

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A MAD HATTER STUDIOS INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTION

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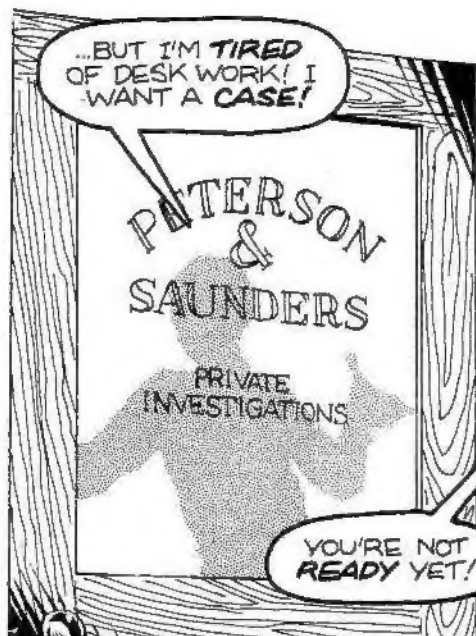
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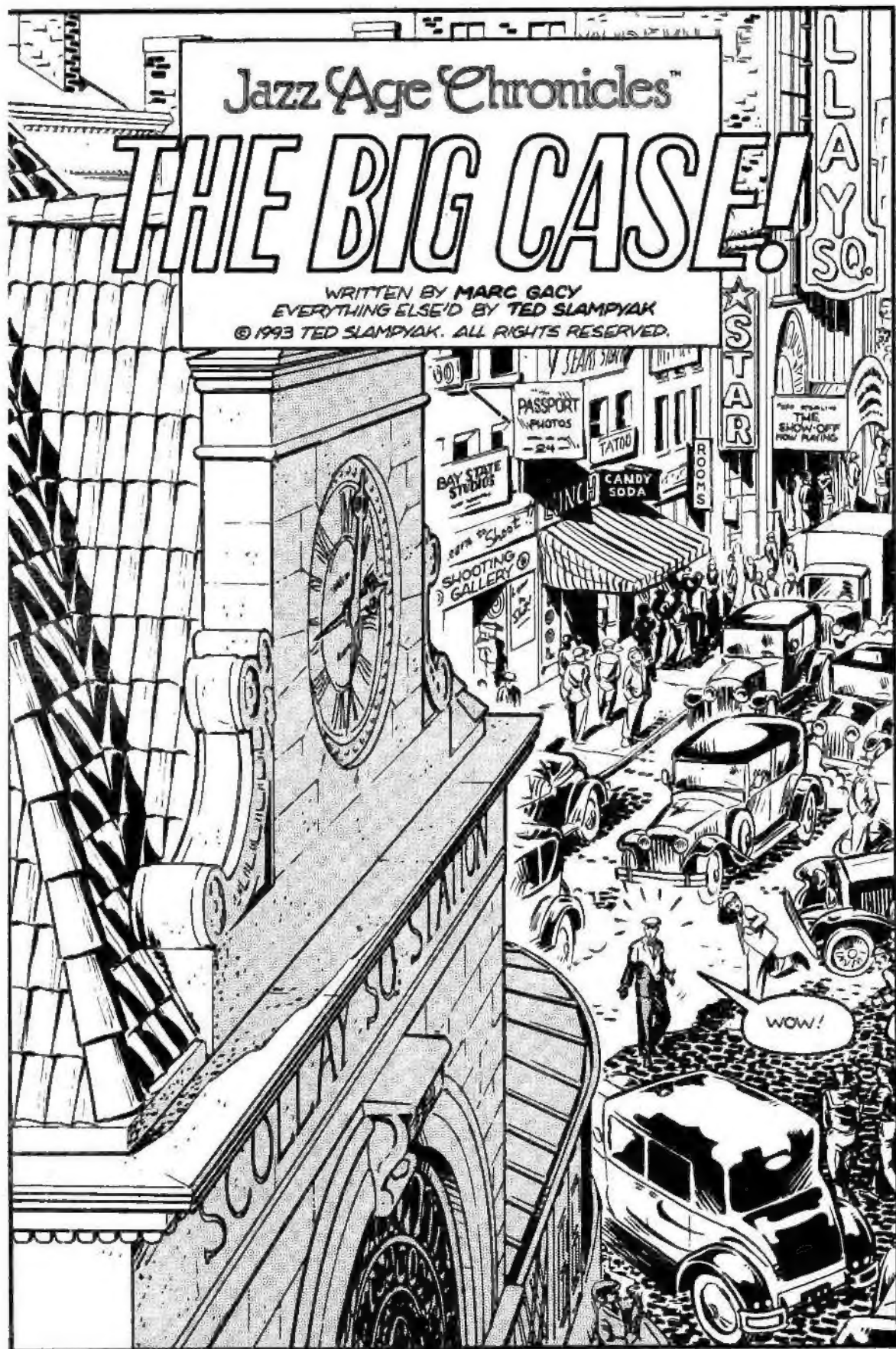
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Jazz Age Chronicles™

THE BIG CASE!

WRITTEN BY MARC GACY
EVERYTHING ELSE'D BY TED SLAMPYAK
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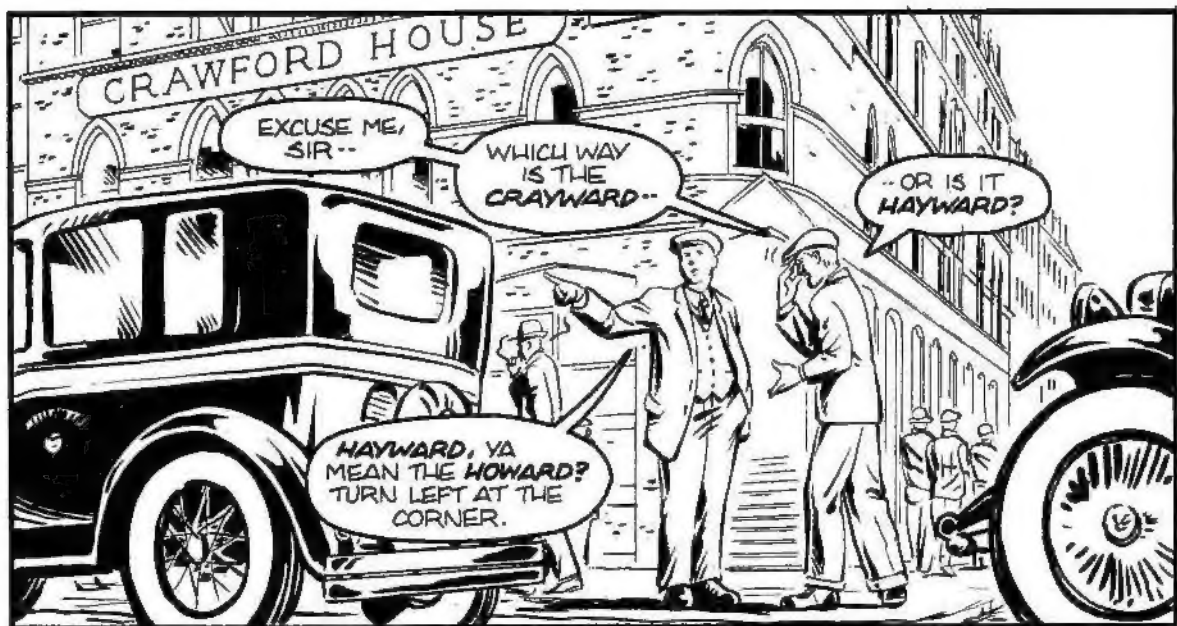
OKAY... "SO, Mr. MIFFLIN... AS A FELLOW PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR, I'D LIKE TO CHAT ABOUT SOME RECENT CASES..."

NO, NO...

"I'M INTERESTED IN HIRING YOU, Mr. MIFFLIN, BUT I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF CASES YOU NORMALLY HANDLE."

YEAH, THAT'S IT!







NINE OUT OF TEN OF THESE LITTLE GEMS CONTAIN DELICIOUS AND HEALTHFUL CULINARY CONFECTIONS!

WELL WORTH THE TWENTY-FIVE CENTS ALONE, MIND YOU!

BUT, FOR THE LUCKY TENTH CUSTOMER, WHO KNOWS WHAT MARVELS AWAIT INSIDE THIS TINY TREASURE TROVE?

A GOLD WATCH, A TWENTY-DOLLAR BILL, OR EVEN A DIAMOND RING!

OVER HERE, MAC!



THEY CAN'T AFFORD TO GIVE OUT DIAMOND RINGS!

SOMETHING FISHY MUST BE GOING ON!

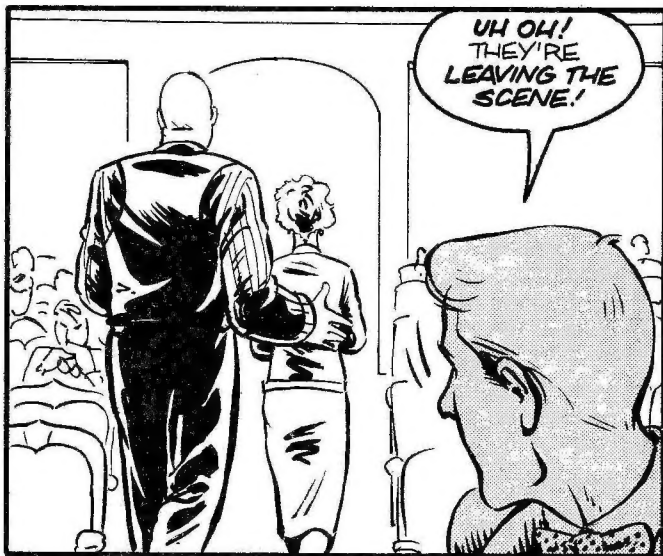


I BET I'VE STUMBLERD ONTO A RACKET! THEY'RE FENCING STOLEN GOODS THROUGH THE CANDY!

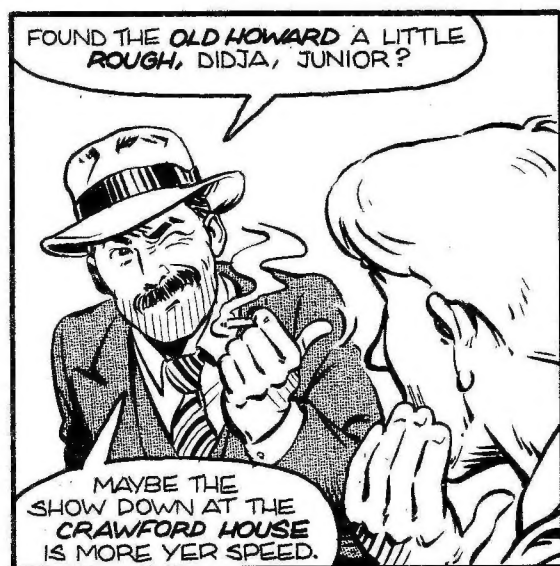


THIS PRIVATE EYE MUST BE TRYING TO CATCH THESE GUYS!

I'LL STOP 'EM, AND IMPRESS BOTH PETERSON AND MENKEN!



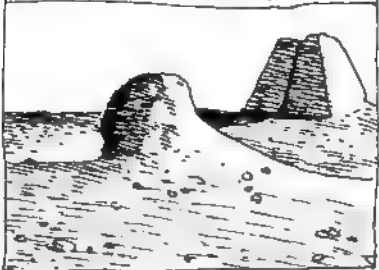




MR. MAMOULIAN PLACES OF INTEREST

5 ROLLAND 23.7
87

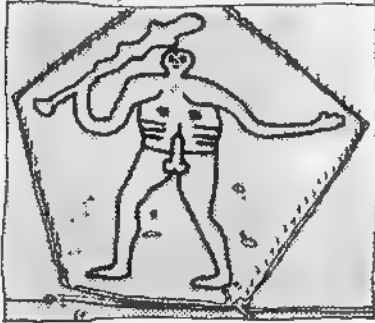
A BEACON TOWER ON THE
GREAT WALL, GANSU
PROVINCE, THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF CHINA



LE CHATEAU DES VIDOMNES,
SIERRE, SWITZERLAND



THE CERNE ABBAS GIANT,
DORSET, ENGLAND



THE STATUE OF LIBERTY,
NEW YORK, USA



GARGANTA DEL CAJES,
PICOS DE EUROPA, SPAIN



A STREET IN TRIPOLI, LYBIA



MENAI SUSPENSION BRIDGE,
NEAR LLANFAIRPWLLGWY-
NGYLLGOGERYCHWYRNDRO-
BWLL-LLANDYSILIOGOGOG-
OCH, ANGLESEY, WALES



THE NATIVITY CATHEDRAL,
(13th-16th CENTURIES) IN THE
KREMLIN, SUZDAL, USSR



KOWLOON, HONG KONG



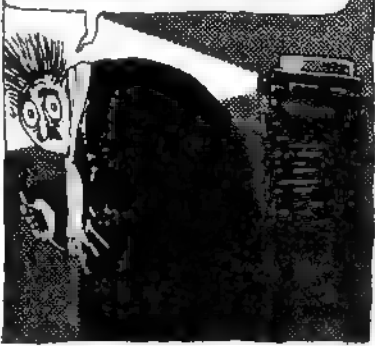
CHARLES BRIDGE, PRAGUE
CZECHOSLOVAKIA



PACIFIC COAST, CALIFORNIA,
USA



ALL PLACES OF INTEREST



LOUISE
DIES.
I'LL FIND
HER AND I'LL
KILL HER
SLOWLY

CALM
DOWN
MICHELLE!

SHE STOLE
MY CAR,
ANGIE

WELL, YOU
COT IT BACK
DIDNT
YOU?

YEAH
BUT SHE'S
KEPT
THE CAR
KEYS!
SHE DIES!

HEY LET'S
ASK THAT
BLOKE ON
THAT BOAT.
MAYBE
HE'S SEEN
HER

HEY
YOU!
HUCK
FINN!

YOU HAVENT SEEN
A GIRL AROUND HERE
TONIGHT HAVE YOU?
ABOUT FIVE-FOUR
WITH BLONDE HAIR-
TIED BACK WITH A
BLACK SCARF?





KARL? THANKS
FOR THIS, YEAH?
YOU'RE A REAL
LIFE SAVER

AND HEH
I LOVE THE
MINI-BAR
ON THIS
BOAT

UH... KARL?
WHY ARE WE
STOPPING?

WH...
WHAT DO YOU
MEAN?

BECAUSE I
STILL HAVEN'T
DECIDED THAT
YOU'RE WORTH
SAVING YET

I MEAN - WHO ARE THOSE
PEOPLE FOLLOWING YOU? WHY
DO THEY WANT TO KILL YOU?
WHY DID YOU STEAL THEIR
CAR?

THEY'RE
FRIENDS OF
MINE

WHY DOESN'T
THAT SURPRISE
ME?

IS THAT
ANOTHER
QUESTION?

WHAT
ABOUT THEIR
CARKEYS?
WHERE HAVE
YOU PUT
THEM?

IN THE
RIVER

SPLAT!





LOUISE?!
ARE YOU INSANE?
CHRIST YOU'RE
BLIND DRUNK
AREN'T YOU?

NO!

OKAY
HOW MANY
FINGERS AM
I HOLDING
UP?

RED

HEY!
JOKE!
KARL
COME
ON!

KARL I
WAS ONLY
JOKING
AROU...

I'M
WORRIED

LOUISE WHAT'S
THIS HELUBAISING
REALLY ALL
ABOUT?

ABOUT
WHAT?

TOMORROW

WHY? WHAT
HAPPENS TOMORROW?

KNEW YOU'D
FORGOTTEN

OH NO, WELL IT'S NOT
YOUR BIRTHDAY - I KNOW THAT.
LOOK, SINCE I LOST MY DIARY
LAST WEEK I'M USELESS ON
REMEMBERING STUFF, WAS
IT SOMETHING IMPORTANT?

NO.
IT'S
NOTHING.
FORGET
IT

LET'S
GET
DRUNK



KARL
I CAN
EXPLAIN!

I DIDN'T STEAL
IT I SWEAR! I FOUND
IT! I WAS GOING TO
GIVE IT 40U BACK-I
JUST FORGOT I HAD
IT. KARL?

LOUISE D'YOU
KNOW WHAT A
DIARY IS?! D'YOU
KNOW WHOSE
HANDS SOMEONE
LEAST WANTS
THEIR DIARY
FALLING INTO?

ANYONE
ELSES!
ANYONE!

AND I'D THOUGHT
TONIGHT WAS ALL
A BIG COINCIDENCE!
NO WONDER I 'HAPPENED'
TO 'RESCUE' YOU! IT
WAS WRITTEN IN MY
DIARY THAT I'D BE
VISITING MY UNCLE
AT HIS BORT HOUSE
TONIGHT!

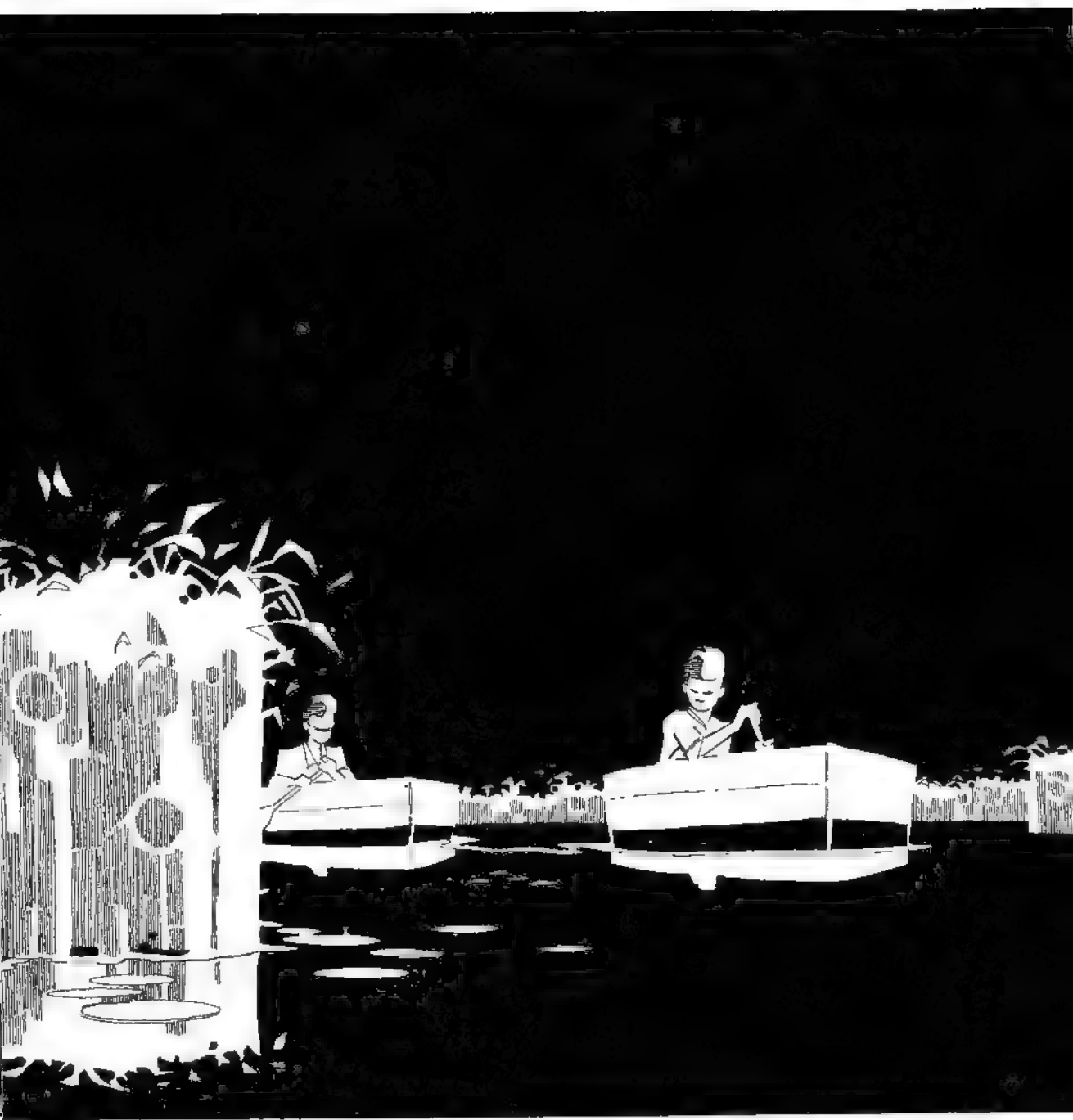
KARL
COME BACK!
I DONT WANT
TO BE ALONE
TONIGHT!

I DONT WANT
TO BE
DIFFERENT!
I DONT WANT
TO CHANGE!
I DONT WANT
TO BE OLD!

MAYBE IF
I DONT SLEEP
TOMORROW
WONT BE ABLE
TO START, OR
MAYBE IF I
SLEEP, I WONT
EVER HAVE TO
WAKE UP

KARL?









14

2

99

14.2.99

Lost in a talcum cloud she's slipping on her sim-skin

*And the **LED** blinks green as she sits fastening her glove*

She sighs and shivers; docks the Mitsubishi ~~Waldo~~

*She dials her boyfriend in **Nairobi**, and she's virtually in love*

*And now the hardware's getting harder and the wetware's getting *wet**

He breathes her name across the ether, and although they've never met

He reaches out across the time zones and he's different from the rest

His ~~phantom~~ fingers tracing simulated circles on her breast

*He whispers his **regret** that he can't share her intimate perfume*

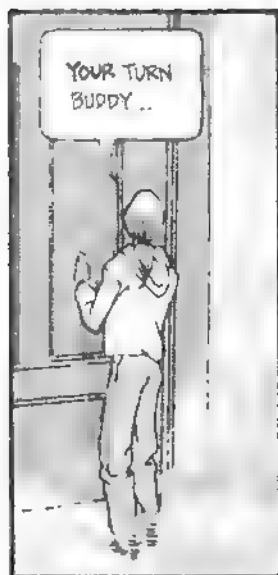
*Naked beneath her circuitry, she gasps into an **EMPTY** room.*

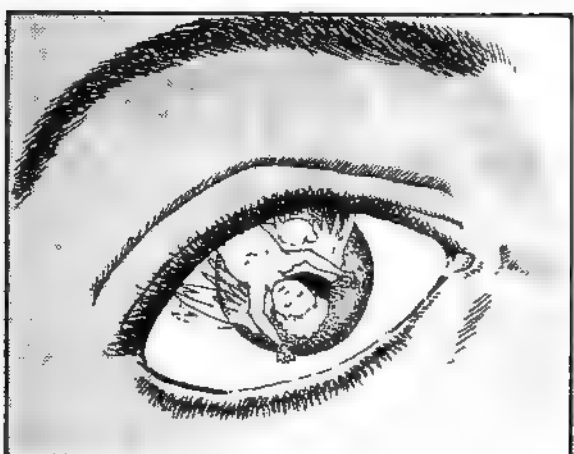
lyrics by Alan Moore

illustration by Dave Johnson

Alan Moore's **Songbook**









LUC, IF YOUR MAMA
COULD SEE YOU NOT
SHARIN' WITH THE
OTHER KIDS SHE'D
CRACK YOUR NOGGIN'.

AWW UNCA
FRANK, THESE
HUMAN KIDS
ARE SO
SIMPLE-
MINDED.

LUCIFER, YOU
LITTLE
KNOTHEAD,
I'VE TAUGHT
YOU BETTER'N
THAT.

IF YOU DON'T
SHOW COMPASSION
FOR OTHERS,...

...THEN DON'T
EXPECT OTHERS
TO SHOW YOU
ANY WHEN YOU
NEED IT!

OH, I GIVE
UP ON YOU!

UNCA
FRANK,
DON'T
BE
MAD
AT ME!

WAAH

AIEEEEEE!!!

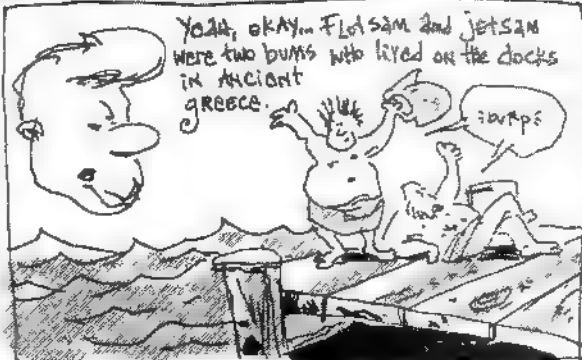
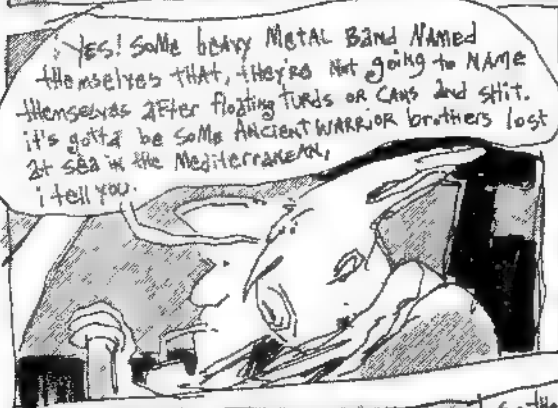
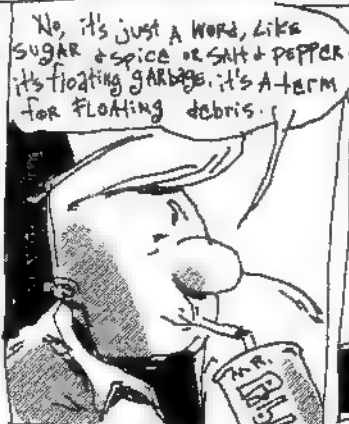


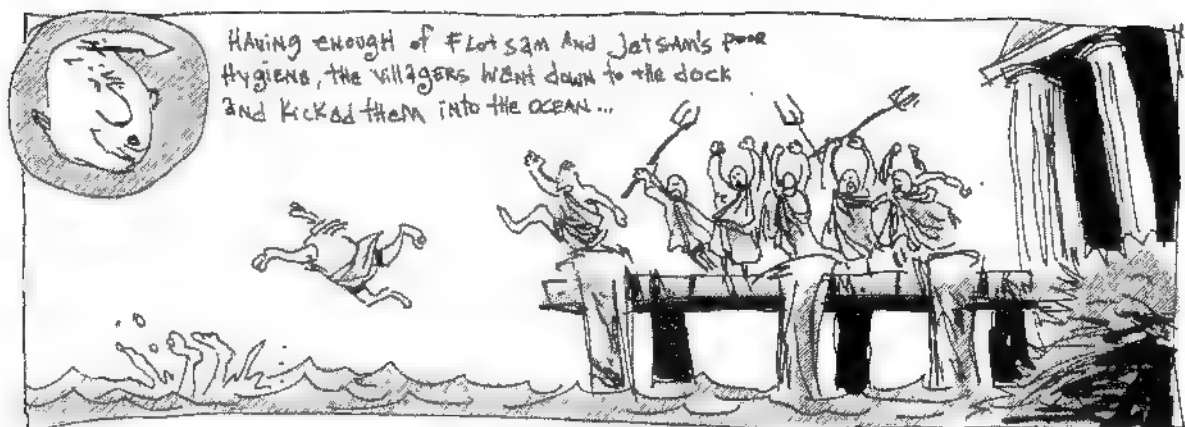




CONTINUED

WE ASKED





HAVING ENOUGH OF FLOT SAM AND JET SAM'S POOR HYGIENE, THE VILLAGERS WENT DOWN TO THE DOCK AND KICKED THEM INTO THE OCEAN...

...but still their bodies floated and stunk up the town.



From THEN ON the gods COMMANDED FLOT SAM AND JET SAM'S SMELLY ASSES TO BOB TO THE SURFACE EVERY NIGHT AS PUNISHMENT ON THE SPIRTEFUL TOWNSPEOPLE.



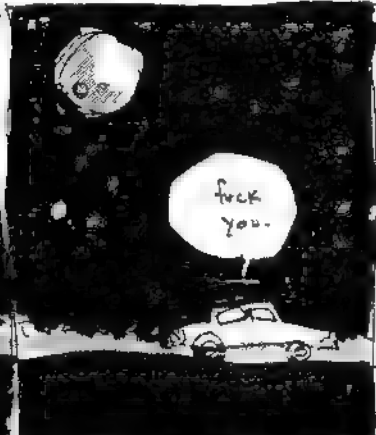
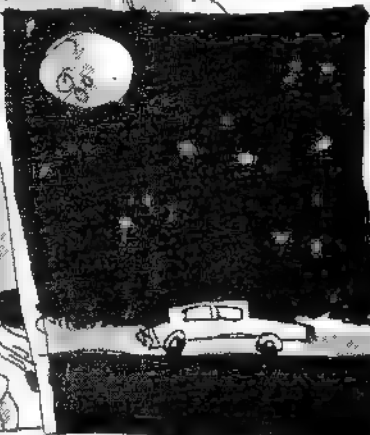
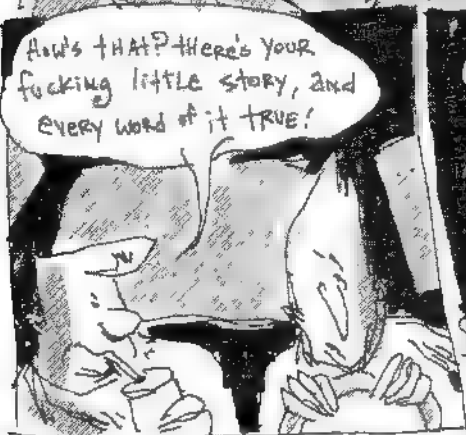
SOON THE TOWN WAS DESERTED. ONLY 2 MEMORY

GREEKVILLE
POPULATION: 1,000
ZERO



AND TO THIS DAY... ALL FLOATING CRAP STILL BEARS THE NAMES OF THOSE STAR-CROSSED BUMS.

AWW'S THAT? HERE'S YOUR FUCKING LITTLE STORY, AND EVERY WORD OF IT TRUE!



MICRA

by Joe Pruett

Since **NEGATIVE BURN** is one of the few comics to increase its circulation during the "glut" of the past year, it's an appropriate place to look at another comic

Is the

which dealt with a similar "glut" several years ago:

MICRA is an acclaimed

series by Ted Boonthanakit and Lamar Waldron. At its peak, **MICRA** had a circulation of 30,000 and had won acclaim from creators ranging from Stan Lee, Trina

long

Robbins and Will Eisner to science fiction legends like Ray Bradbury and Roger Zelazny. It was the first comic series to deal with virtual reality and one of the first with a realistic ecological theme. Even

when the black-&-white bust of the late 1980's hit, **MICRA** managed to outsell stalwarts that are still with us like **XENOZOIC TALES**, **LOVE AND ROCKETS**, and

vacation

over?

OMAHA. **MICRA** seemed to have everything going for it.

Then, after **MICRA** #7 appeared in 1988—with a cliffhanger ending which left all the

heroes either dead or near death—it vanished. Ironically, the cliff-hanger has helped keep interest alive in the book, since long-time fans still approach Waldron at conventions, desperate to know who survives.

So, what happened? Is there any chance the series will ever resume, to finish its originally anticipated 12-issue run? To find out, **NEGATIVE BURN** spoke with **MICRA**'s author, Lamar Waldron.

"**MICRA**'s hiatus was mainly due to the 'back-&-white bust', but career decisions by Ted and myself also played a big part," Waldron explained.

"**MICRA**'s sales were still good for a black-&-white during the glut, but our contract had ended with David Kraft's Comics Interview Publications. We parted on amicable terms, and looked for a larger publisher to 'ride out' the glut. After talking to several, we settled on Apple, which was then publishing **ELFQUEST** and other good titles. But as we worked to finish #8, the 'black-&-white bust' just seemed to deepen, with no end in sight. So, Ted and I had to pursue better-paying career options, though we always intended to finish the series."

Waldron went on to do freelance writing and desktop publishing, though he continued to script comics whenever he could. He scripted a couple of issues of **MICKEY MOUSE ADVENTURES** for Disney and wrote almost two dozen issues of **SPEED RACER**, managing to pay tribute to everything from **PSYCHO** to John D.

MacDonald to Russ Meyer films in the process.

Ted's career took him in a different direction, though he also did occasional comic book and card work, primarily for Topps (home of former **MICRA** co-editor Dwight Jon Zimmerman). Ted became one of Atlanta's most sought after advertising artists, which let him and his wife Kami buy a house and start a family. But Ted also began doing storyboards for movies filming around Atlanta, like "Freejack", "Fried Green Tomatoes," and "Consenting Adults."

Impressed by his speed and the quality of his art, producers began offering Ted work in films outside of Atlanta. Like the 1993 CBS mini-series "The First Next Time" starring Craig T. Nelson, Ted was originally hired to do storyboards and production illustrations based on Syd Mead's designs—a dream come true for Ted, who'd been influenced by Mead in his work for **MICRA**. But, the producers were so impressed with Ted's futuristic design ability that Ted wound up replacing Syd Mead as the futuristic concept artist.

Other films followed, like Russell Mulcahey's "The Real McCoy," Alan Pakula's "Pelican Brief," and he even did designs for Michael Jackson's unused "Adams Family Values" video. His most recent work aired work was the HBO movie "Up Against the Wall," directed by John Frankenheimer.

Ironically, because Ted now works almost exclusively on movies, **MICRA** can finally be finished. Unlike Ted's advertising days, when he faced a constant stream of ever-changing deadlines on various projects, Ted can focus on one project at a time. Since there are always gaps between the end of his work on one movie and the beginning of his work on another, he has time to complete **MICRA**, as soon as the right publisher can be found.

Waldron is also ready to see **MICRA** finished. He's completing the research for a massive five-year project detailing John and Robert Kennedy's battles against organized crime and Castro, and has sold his business interests so he can devote himself to writing.

"**MICRA** was originally designed to be a science fiction novel told in twelve issues, but I've tightened the plotting on the remaining issues, so the story will be finished in eleven issues," Waldron explains. "Seven issues were published, and the eighth is half-completed. More than 200 pages of material are already completed, almost 70% of the projected 297-page total."

NEGATIVE BURN is happy to present the following chapter from the **MICRA** prose novel to comic book fans for the first time, since it's only other publication was in a limit-circulation science fiction magazine not available to the direct market. "I started writing **MICRA** originally as a regular prose novel," Waldron explains, "but the visual opportunities seemed so rich it had to be done in comics form. I may finish the prose version some day, but right now, my main priority is finishing the comic book version with Ted. Mike Catron at Apple has been very helpful to us, looking at publishers for **MICRA** who can get it the exposure it needs in today's tight market."

NEGATIVE BURN will be happy to forward any letters from fans (or prospective publishers) to the creators.

2029 A.D.

Jon Griffin wasn't sure if he was perspiring from the brisk pace of his walk or because of his nerves. After all, it wasn't every day a man became a father for the first time—especially when he'd just turned forty-five. Jon had seen far younger men become frazzled at the prospect of imminent fatherhood. Still, he thought, the

wore the brief tropical attire the weather dictated at this time of year, they were both dressed in bright orange clothing that fully covered their arms and legs. Squinting his eyes, Jon thought he recognized the small, blond woman as his wife and waved. She didn't seem to notice. Jon inhaled deeply before cautiously walking down the hill.

Catherine didn't spot him until he was only thirty feet away. As she trotted out to meet him, he noticed that the unusual orange garment she wore was a flightsuit. It was quite a switch from the usual tropical business clothes she usually wore. She dropped a stuffed bag she was carrying and threw her arms around him.

"I thought you'd never get here!" she said, smiling.

"I'm sorry. But finalizing those acquisitions you arranged couldn't wait."

Picking up her bag, she led him to the man she'd been standing with. He was tall, with broad shoulders and a trim waist.

"This is Wallace, our pilot," Catherine explained. "He's just joined Griffin Technologies—he was part of the Pyrotronics deal. But he's very familiar with the San Simeon area."

"It's good to have you aboard," Jon said, shaking hands with the pilot.

"I'm honored you've chosen me for this assignment."

The pilot reached into a pouch beside him and pulled out a small orange package. "Here's your flight suit, sir, since you'll be leaving the speeder once we reach California, you'll have to wear one of these. They're treated to kill most biological contaminants you might encounter. don't worry about the hood until we get there."

The pilot glanced around quickly. Even though no strangers were in earshot, he lowered his voice before continuing. "I wasn't sure exactly how you wanted me to log our flight pur-

pose. I need to file it with ground control before we can leave."

Before Jon could reply, he heard Catherine speak up. "Put down property inspection," she said, "and don't worry about our flight plan. I've already secured clearance."

After pulling on the jumpsuit over his clothes, Jon followed Catherine and the pilot into the triple airlocks, which kept the air inside the dome free of the toxic particles and gases that fouled the air outside. They emerged into a glass-walled chamber. Here, more than a dozen enclosed exit ramps led to speeders parked on the tarmac outside. Each speeder and ramp were connected by an air-tight seal. Jon and Catherine followed the pilot, as he headed down the ramp that led to one of their company's speeders, a four-seater.

Jon was the last to climb through the entrance chamber, closing the hatch behind him. Catherine had settled into one of the two seats behind the pilot. As Jon eased himself down beside her, Catherine looked at him



heat wasn't helping matters any. High above him, the thin transparent dome covering North Aspen still held the day's warm air, even though it was early December. Glancing at his time piece, he saw that it was almost four. Catherine would be waiting. She'd stayed home all day to finalize the preparations, while he'd rushed in to their corporate headquarters for several important meetings.

Jon left the cushioned path and turned toward a low hill, hoping to save time. After reaching the top of the hill, he paused and scanned the dome's perimeter that stretched before him, through the palm trees, he spotted the North Exit Complex, where several dozen people were coming and going. But off to the left, he could barely make out two small figures, a man and a woman that stood out from the rest of the crowd. Unlike the others, who

BOLD



and
said, "You
look tired. Maybe you
should try to get some sleep
on the way. It'll be hours before we get
to California."

Before Jon could answer, the pilot turned back, saying, "It'll be exactly three hours and twenty-four minutes. And I'll try to make it as smooth a ride as possible so you can both rest if you want."

The pilot was true to his word as the speeder began its gentle rise from the platform. Jon felt only a slight jolt as the forward engines cut on, though the sound level increased markedly. He looked back through the speeder's rear window to see the cluster of elliptical domes disappear behind him. Looking down through the window beside him, he saw that the valleys below were barren and lifeless. Jon recalled trips only a few decades earlier, when luxuriant forests and thriving cities dotted the landscape. Now, there were only dust and rocks and the decaying ruins of abandoned homes. Real and imagined contamination scares had caused those who could afford it to seek the safety of the domes. The rest sought refuge in the teeming slums that sprang up wherever a supply of almost clean air or water could be found.

Still looking Outside, Jon said, "I just hope the tests were accurate—I've heard what happens in the lab

sometimes."

"The doctor ran two separate samples through the entire battery. They were all clean.

We're going to have a fine, healthy child," Catherine said as she leaned closer to Jon and gently grasped his hand. "Our daughter will live in a clean, contam-free city. She'll never have to worry about the air she breathes or the food she eats."

"We've both worked hard to see to that," he said with the weariness of a long business day in his voice. "I didn't mean to sound harsh or question your arrangements. You know I want this as much as you."

"Are you sure?" she asked, looking up at him.

"Of course," he replied, trying to sound reassuring and keep his voice from expressing the doubts that still plagued him. The whole idea of starting a family now had been Catherine's. He was only going through with it because she wanted a child so badly. But, having finally accepted her wishes, he wanted to appear enthusiastic. After all the work she'd put into it, he didn't want anything to spoil things for her, now.

Trying to get comfortable, Jon began fidgeting with the seat controls. He closed his eyes in a vain attempt to sleep and began thinking about the events that had brought them on a rare sojourn to an Outside destination.

He remembered getting the genetic test results twenty years ago, before they were married. Both had been diagnosed as carrying potentially defective traits, an increasingly common diagnosis at the turn of the century. This ruled out the insemination and in vitro techniques that many of their friends had used; they considered adoption, but in the carefully selected popu-

Boin

lation of the domes, there were no unwanted children to adopt. And finding an Outside baby with a contamination-count low enough to meet dome occupancy standards was prohibitively expensive.

So, they devoted all of their energy for the next two decades to nurturing their company. By carefully acquiring promising small companies, they managed to build Griffin Technologies into one of America's most profitable small conglomerates. Just last year they'd bought a life-lease on one of the largest dominiums in New Aspen. The extra living space had made Catherine start talking again about raising a family. she kept harping on the fact that they could now afford the tremendous legal and medical expenses needed to find an OUTside child clean enough for adoption. He'd voiced plenty of reservations at first, but gradually, she wore down his resistance and he gave in to her desire for motherhood.

From that moment on, Catherine pursued the goal with the same determination she'd shown in building the company. She'd screened the personnel files of thousands of former Outside employees, looking for possible families, and she'd even concocted a cover story for their fellow Insiders about "taking in the child of a dead cousin." the jumble of activity that had characterized recent months replaying in Jon's mind, as he reviewed all the details to make sure Catherine hadn't overlooked anything.

Suddenly, Jon snapped his head up off his seat cushion and opened his eyes. His mouth felt dry and the ship was shuddering, as it slowed to descent speed. Glancing at his time piece, he realized that he must have dozed off after all. Looking out the window, he saw several mountain tops looming through the polluted evening haze.

As they topped the mountains and descended through the clouds, a clearer vista spread before him. Clinging to the narrow shore between the mountains and the Pacific were thousands of shacks, seemingly built on top of each other, stretching up and down the beach in an endless progression. Jon was appalled at the congestion.

Still, he reasoned, the people in the rickety shacks below were luckier than the slum-dwellers who lived further inland. Here they at least had the fresh air which blew in from the ocean. The contam-count was probably so low that they only had to worry about clean water and food. He wondered if there was any attempt to control the heavy influx of people into such an area. Through most of the news reports he watched concerned those who could afford to live inside the domes, there were frequent reports about mass migrations of Outsiders away from areas found to be contaminated. What would happen when there were no more low-contam places for those people to move to? Where would the new arrivals go when the slums were full and could hold no more?

He was tossed in his seat as the speeder threaded its way between the tall buildings spread among the shacks. He instinctively grasped Catherine's hand as he continued to look out the window, fascinated. The area teemed with people, so many that the narrow paths and roads seemed to writhe as a single, living mass. he got a better look as the speeder came to a halt and hovered above the tangled mass of plastic, brick, and cardboard which

formed the dwelling place of the family they'd come to see.

The pilot of the speeder sent a transmission as they hovered above their destination. Within minutes, they were joined by another craft. "Okay, Mr. and Mrs. Griffin," the pilot announced, "the slummers below can see that the Army's here! they won't give you any trouble!"

"Army? I don't understand?" Jon asked.

"This area is under Martial Law," the pilot responded. "Be sure to stay outdoors so the Army ship can keep an eye on you. The reader shows there's a good, clean breeze off the sea tonight, so you won't need to use your hoods or an air supply. Watch your step on the way down the ladder."

Inside her ramshackle home, Maria Morales heard the approach of the speeder and the cries from her neighbors. She went to the corner of the main room where her two little girls were engaged by the flicker of an old HDV monitor. Angela, scarcely one year old, was already dressed in a newly purchased outfit which even included shoes. Her older sister Rita was lying on the cardboard floor next to her, barely dressed in flimsy rags. She turned and looked at her mother, who had begun fidgeting with Angela's new clothes.

"Is Angela going away, Mommy?"

"Yes, she's going to live in a real house—*inside!* You should be proud."

"I don't want her to go! I want to go too!" Rita cried.

"You don't know what you want. Quick now, get out of sight! I hear them at the door!"

Jon felt uneasy, standing with his wife on the dirt in front of the shack. He was shivering, and he wasn't just from the chilling breeze which whipped through his clothing. He could hear voices and see things move in the shadows, but no one approached them. It was almost night, and there were no street lights. Only a few of the shacks had outside lights, and what illumination there was spilled out from open windows and doors. Unfamiliar odors hung thick in the air. As the stench assailed Jon's nostrils, he wished he'd brought an air supply. Catherine was getting ready to knock again, when the door opened.

"Mrs. Morales? This is my husband -



band, Jon," Catherine said.

He nodded slightly in Maria's direction, unsure of what to say.

His wife turned to him, saying, "Maria worked at our Salinas plant until it closed last year. Her former supervisor is my assistant now, and he told me that Maria might be able to help us out—" Catherine stopped short as a little girl cautiously crawled through the doorway to Maria's leg and looked up. "And this is Angela. Isn't she beautiful, Jon?" Catherine said as Maria picked up the smiling child.

"Yes, Cath, she's lovely."

"Won't you come in, please?" Maria said hesitantly. "My home is small, but we do the best we can."

"No, thank you," Jon replied, "we really haven't much time. We can't stay outside long without having to go through the whole deportation process. Now, I understand the—uh—payment is ninety thousand dollars. Here is my certified check redeemable at any financial center."

Maria grabbed the check eagerly. Catching herself, she looked at the couple with eyes that asked for forgiveness. "Angela will be much better off inside, with you," she said haltingly. "Someday, I hope to use the money to buy a place inside for myself and my daughter, Rita."

"Of course," Jon replied, trying to act as he were completing a business transaction. Instead of buying a child. "Our attorney says you'll need to card this to officially complete the transaction." He handed Maria the



formal document attached to an ID plate.

Maria quickly inserted her identity card and punched in her code. After her copy of the document solidified, she returned the plate. Maria looked down at her daughter, then lifted her up. Looking into Angela's eyes, she tried to communicate feelings she couldn't say aloud. With tears in her eyes, she handed her daughter to Catherine, as she said, "Go with her now. She's your new mother. She has candy and presents for you at your new home."

Suddenly, Jon saw a scruffy little girl run through the doorway toward Catherine. Maria quickly grabbed the child by the arm.

"Rita!" Maria said sternly. "I told you not to—"

"No! No! Don't take my sister!" Rita cried.

Jon looked in disbelief at the screaming child and motioned for his wife to go up the path to the speeder's

ladder. The ragged girl, struggling against her mother's hold, looked pitiful and he felt a stab of guilt at what they were doing.

"Go now!" Maria yelled at him.

Jon glanced around nervously as the doors and windows of the shacks around them filled with people straining to check out the commotion. Teenagers and children all wearing filthy rags, were the first to come out to the street, but they were soon followed by adults. Jon wondered if they knew what was happening. An object that flew past his head and shattered on the wall behind him provided the answer.

Maria jerked Rita up from the ground and gave her two hard slaps across the face. She tried to carry her back inside, but the wailing child grabbed the door sill and wouldn't let go.

Jon ran toward the ladder, where Catherine had stopped halfway up. She cradled Angela in one arm as she looked at Jon, her eyes wide with alarm. "Behind you!" she shouted.

He turned to see a young man ahead of the main group, wielding a jagged pipe. He was less than a yard away from Jon. As the youth reared back the pipe to swing it, Jon could only raise his arm while he stumbled toward the ladder. Time seemed to slow, and he saw the burning hate in the teenager's eyes. Jon now knew that what they had done was wrong, terribly wrong. He gazed in horror as the pipe swung toward his head, while the cries of the crowd—or were they tears?—assailed his ears.

There was a flash of white as the youth stiffened and froze in position. As the white, powdery cloud around the teenager faded, Jon could see the cartridge lodged in the youth's shoulder that had emitted the paralyzing dust.

"Get up the ladder! Hurry!" commanded the soldier who leaned out of the escort craft hovering above. She raised the rifle she'd just fired and let go another round.

Jon wasted no time in complying. As he scurried up, he saw others in the mob hit by the numbing powder. But for every one that went down, two more seemed to take their place. Jon didn't look long, as he felt the ladder shake from being hit by debris hurled from the crowd. He scrambled up the ladder until he felt Catherine and the pilot grab his shoulders. They yanked him through the opening and slammed the hatched closed.

"Jon, I was afraid—so afraid you'd be—" Catherine stammered as she threw her arms around him.

"I—I'm all right," he said. "What about Angela?" He could see her lying in the left back seat, crying.

Still trembling from the ordeal, Catherine carefully picked up Angela, then smiled weakly as she laid her back on the seat, saying, "She's just wet. I need to change her."

While Catherine fumbled in her bag for a clean liner, Jon climbed into the front seat next to the pilot, who was on the radio.

The pilot turned toward Jon and said, "The Army has an Enforcement Unit on the way! Now that there's a Code Six, we can't leave the area without our escort—and they can't leave until the Enforcer gets here! Soon as it arrives, we'll hightail it out of here!"

While Catherine busied herself with the child, Jon looked out the front window at the scene he'd just left below. The narrow streets were filled with people, shak-

ing their fists at the ship and brandishing crude weapons. There were hundreds now, a tattered mass of desperate humanity. Men, women, children—he could feel their hate, directed at him and the clean, uncontaminated life he represented.

Jon struggled to make out Maria's house, but it was difficult with the streets so crowded. Finally spotting it, he was relieved to see that it wasn't the focus of any attack. No, it was he and his wife the mob was angry at, not the poor woman who'd had to sell her daughter for a chance at a healthy life.

Suddenly, he noticed a glow near Maria's home, at the rear of the crowd. It slowly lit up the area with a golden radiance. The crowd became more agitated as people panicked and started running. He was horrified to see children and old folks pushed down and trampled. Then, he saw the cause of their desperate flight.

It was a large, armored Mobile Enforcement Unit. As tracks rolled it forward, the tall center turret shot a stream of flame, engulfing buildings and people without distinction. The flames danced and flowed over the shacks with incredible speed. Within moments, the area he had just escaped was a fiery mass. Only a miracle could have spared Maria's house—and its occupants—from the quickly spreading fire. His stomach churned and he began to feel sick as he turned away from the carnage outside his window.

"Jon, what's going on out there? What are they doing?" Catherine yelled, trying to make herself heard over Angela's cries as she tried to secure the infant's dry liner.

How could he tell her? What could he say about the horror going on outside? Maria and Rita were probably dead. Or perhaps they were horribly burned. If he told Catherine the truth, it could poison this day for her forever. For the rest of her life, she might blame herself for what had happened to Angela's mother and sister. It would ruin everything they'd worked so hard for. Jon squeezed his eyes shut as he tried to think of what to say.

Mercifully, the pilot interrupted. "Hold tight, folks! the Army's Enforcer is here, so we can go!" As the pilot glanced out the window toward the flames, he chuckled, "That flammable spray is great, isn't it Mr. Griffin? It lets the Army control those filthy Outsiders—and clear out the slums for new squatters—all at once. I'll bet you're glad it's all yours, now."

"What—what do you mean?" Jon asked.

"We developed the spray at Pyrotronics. I used to fly the execs out to watch the Army's tests. that's one company you'll never regret buying, sir," the pilot boasted.

Jon couldn't believe what he was hearing. he glanced back at Catherine, who was crouched down in her seat, braced for take-off. She held the loudly crying infant close to her face, murmuring endearments to quiet her. Apparently, Angela's squalls had kept Catherine from hearing the pilot's remarks.

Suddenly, Jon was pushed back in his seat as the nose of the ship rose and they went into a steep vertical climb. He was pushed back in his seat as they started to gain speed. In a few short hours, he thought, they would be safely inside.



"Jon, what happened out there?" Catherine asked again, as she cradled the now quiet Angela tightly in her arms.

He turned back to look at her questioning eyes. He saw the care with which she held the child—their child. Angela played with the collar of her new mother's flight-suit, totally unaware of the tragic loss she'd just suffered. Jon realized that neither she—nor Catherine—could ever be told what had happened to her mother and sister.

With a sigh, Jon spoke softly. "There—there's nothing to worry about, dear. It's all right. the Army shot off a few signal flares and dispersed the crowd. That's all."

A look of relief crossed Catherine's face. "I was afraid something might have happened to Maria and her other daughter," she looked down at Angela, who playfully grabbed her finger and smiled.

Jon gripped his armrest tightly. He couldn't bear to look at his wife while he lied to her and he didn't dare look out the window. He could only close his eyes and try to extinguish the fire that burned in his mind.



KABUKI



Everything you thought
you knew about the East
is about to change...

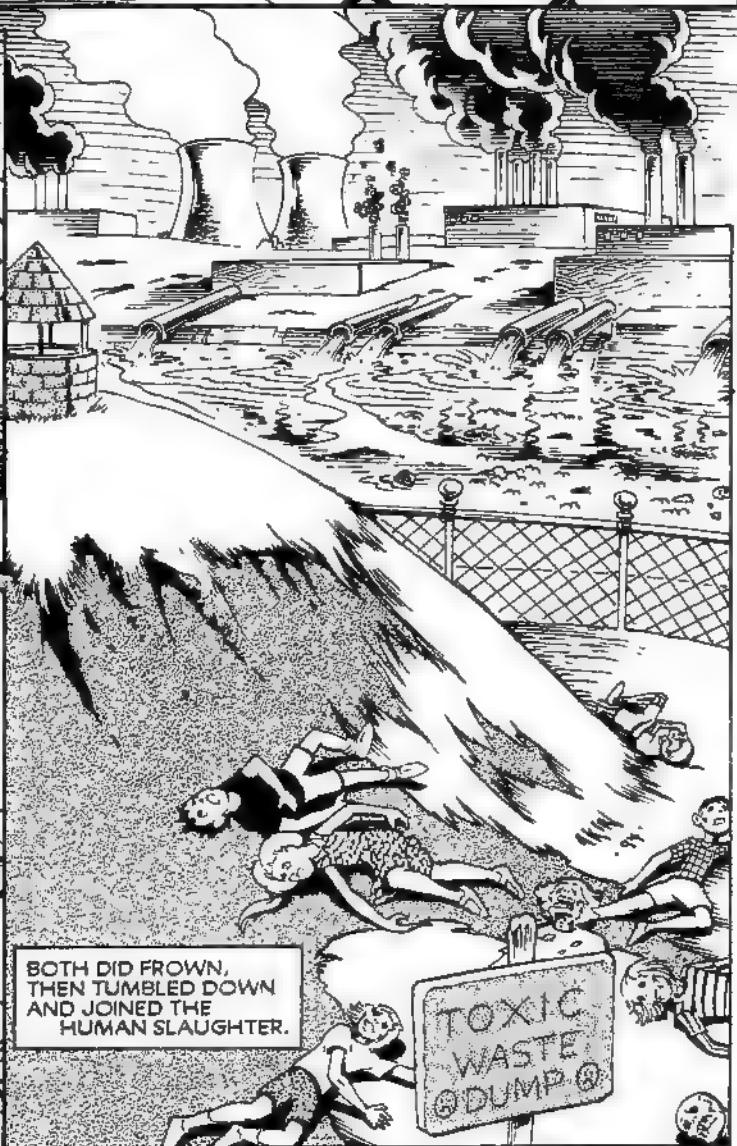
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"Jack & Jill"



TOXIC UPDATE BY DOUG WHEELER & IAN AKIN

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EULOGY TO MARX

ON THE
FOURTEENTH
OF MARCH

AT A QUARTER TO THREE
IN THE AFTERNOON

THE GREATEST LIVING THINKER
CEASED TO THINK

HE HAD BEEN LEFT ALONE FOR
SCARCELY TWO MINUTES, AND
WHEN WE CAME BACK

WE FOUND
HIM IN HIS
ARMCHAIR

PEACEFULLY GONE
TO SLEEP

BUT FOREVER

AN IMMEASURABLE LOSS HAS BEEN
SUSTAINED BOTH BY THE MILITANT
PROLETARIAT OF EUROPE AND

AMERICA, AND BY HISTORICAL SCIENCE
IN THE DEATH OF THIS MAN

PAUL POPE



JUST AS DARWIN DISCOVERED
THE LAW OF DEVELOPMENT OF
ORGANIC NATURE,



SO MARX DISCOVERED



THE LAW OF
DEVELOPMENT
OF HUMAN
HISTORY.



MARX WAS ABOVE ALL ELSE



A REVOLUTIONIST.



FIGHTING WAS HIS
ELEMENT.



AND HE DIED

BELOVED



REVERED



AND
MOURNED



BY MILLIONS OF REVOLUTIONARY



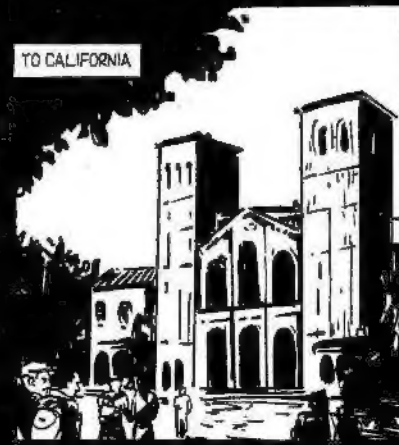
FELLOW WORKERS



FROM THE
MINES OF
SIBERIA



TO CALIFORNIA



IN ALL PARTS OF
EUROPE AND AMERICA





HIS NAME WILL



ENDURE



THROUGH THE AGES



AND SO WILL
HIS WORK

*This eulogy was
delivered at the
grave-sight of
Mars by his
beloved friend,
F. Engels
1883*

P

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Reading **NEGATIVE BURN** #10 made me realize for perhaps not the very first time that this independent anthology book truly is reaching near-professional standards, quite possibly even above that. With more and more 'real' professionals entering this series' table of contents and some other lesser-known but very talented newcomers, I feel **NEGATIVE BURN** is among the most enjoyable books currently being put out by the myriad of companies on the market these days. **KNIGHTS OF THE SKULL** was a good and intriguing war story, which probably took some historical research from the side of Wayne Vansant. The idea of mine dogs in a war is terrible as well as disgusting, but it was interesting to see how the German soldiers tried to deal with it, and succeeded, for that matter.

THE ART SPECTRUM was the first introduction of former fellow letterhacker Mark Lucas, whose insightful letters I've always admired, and I must admit it had an off-beat, unconventional feel to it. Instead of the usual run-of-the-mill stories we see so often these days, Mark gives us an amazingly touching story. Bil Ruth's art complemented the unconventional writing style real smoothly, giving the whole a very professional feel. After Malcolm Bourne and Jan Childress, Mark Lucas now enters the field of writing. I wish him the best of luck with it.

CLASSICS DESECRATED presented us yet another funny episode, although some might argue it was a bit too "Beavis and Butthead" oriented. **WETWORK** was surprisingly good, for I thought Phil Hester wouldn't be able to pull off a story without words and a clean, crisp style, as he usually likes to flood the pages with words, dialogue and other comments. This parody of the old-fashioned super hero vs. villain was much appreciated and it showed us that nowadays in comics the blood flows in abnormal abundance.

PROJECT HIGH was thought-provokingly good. The ending remark "Funny what's **EASY** to show," must've struck a chord, as far as some readers were concerned. Although the tale as a whole probably was light-hearted, this ending made it into what is almost an emotional statement. Good job, therefore.

RUBBER BLANKET has opened my eyes. Being a fan of the old Mazzucchelli work with the Dark Knight, you can imagine how overjoyed I must've been seeing how his style has evolved way past his old standards. David's work has matured, and you can bet on it I'm going to try and get my hands on those issues of **RUBBER BLANKET**. Thanks for opening my previously ignorant eyes, guys!

In closing, this was a great ish, perhaps even one of the best so far, if not the best. Looking forward to the upcoming Gaiman story. See you around, somewhere next month. Glad to see that the **RUBBER BLANKET** preview opened your eyes up, Olav. That's what's it was meant to do! Go out and get your copy now! If you can't find a copy then order directly from Mr. Mazzucchelli himself at the address provided in the ad, and be sure to tell him that Joe sent you!

T. R. Tuckman
423 Livingston Ave. Suite 2
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-3463

I bought my first copy of **NEGATIVE BURN** a few weeks ago. My compliments on your fine publication.

I'll cut to the chase. It was mentioned a full-color t-shirt of Ken Meyer Jr.'s extraordinary cover art for issue nine would soon be available. My question to you is, "how may I get one?" Well, the Ken Meyer Jr. **DOMINIQUE** t-shirt is hold right now, but when it's back on schedule I'll be sure to post it here. Keep looking.

Congratulations! **NEGATIVE BURN** is growing into a monster of an anthology and the talent you have assembled for upcoming issues will have me reading for years! You've got me hooked!

I wanted to take the opportunity to introduce to you my monster, **1 EYE OPEN**, **1 EYE CLOSED**. It is a quarterly comics anthology and I am the editor and a contributing artist. Although there are differences between our books, I'm sure our goal is the same: To put together the best comics art and stories and get them out there where folks can read them! Yes, there's more to it than that, but in a nutshell that's what I am trying to do.

In every issue of **1 EYE OPEN** I have reserved space for promoting other independent comics that I feel will appeal to the readers. Some of the space is for other projects that contributing artists are working on, and some of the space is for traded ads. I believe many readers of **1 EYE OPEN** would enjoy **NEGATIVE BURN** and vice versa. Especially if you are going to continue Jeff Nicholson's **LOST LAUGHTER**. I can't wait!

1 EYE OPEN #2 will be out in August. Continued success with **NEGATIVE BURN**.

Be sure to check out this interesting comic if you haven't already done so. (**PLUG**). It's a fun and interesting read. Trust me.

Yes, it's true, Jeff Nicholson's **LOST LAUGHTER** will be continued in these pages starting with issue #14. If you haven't had a chance to see Jeff's **LOST LAUGHTER** before don't worry 'cause we'll be bringing you up to date on all the developments. **LOST LAUGHTER** will run from issue #14 through #18 and will bring to a climax Jeff's work from **ULTRA KLUTZ** and **LOST LAUGHTER**—10 years worth of work!

1 EYE OPEN, 1 EYE CLOSED



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